HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR RADIO SERIES (the original scripts)

Series 1. Episode 3.

The Idol.

TONY HANCOCK
With

MOIRA LISTER, BILL KERR & SIDNEY JAMES
In

"HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR"

Dramatis Personae

Tony Hancock (a waif) .....Mr. Anthony Alouitious St. John Hancock 11

Moira Lister (Tony's Girl friend).....Miss Moira Lister

Bill Kerr (Tony's best friend).....Mr. Bill Kerr

Sidney James (a friend?).....Mr. Sidney James

Incidental music composed by WALLY STOTT and recorded by THE BBC REVUE ORCHESTRA, conducted by HARRY RABINOWITZ

SCRIPT BY: RAY GALTON & ALAN SIMPSON
ANNOUNCER: ADRIAN WALLER
PRODUCED BY: DENNIS MAIN WILSON

REHEARSALS: Fri., 12th November 1954: 2pm: Cast Read Through,
Listening Room, Aeolian
Sat., 13th " " 10 am: Cast - PLAYHOUSE
RECORDING: Sat., 13th. " " 12.30 - 1.15 pm., PLAYHOUSE
TRANSMISSION: Tues, 16th. " " 9.30 - 10 pm., Light ab GOS
REPEATS: ( )

HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR (3)

GRAMS: (ON RED LIGHT) "HANCOCK OPENING" - PART ONE

ADRIAN: We present Tony Hancock with Moira Lister, Bill Kerr and Sidney James in….

GRAMS: "HANCOCK OPENING" - PART TWO

TONY: (ALL EXCITED: BREATH) "Hancock's Half Hour".

GRAMS: "HANCOCK OPENING" - PART THREE THEME UP

MOIRA: Honestly Bill, Tony's getting impossible. Just because he's had a little success on the first two programmes, he's got so conceited.

BILL: Well, you know why - he's had a fan letter.

MOIRA: What, after all these years?

BILL: Yeah. Some whacky dame wrote and told him he's the most handsome comedian on radio today.

MOIRA: Today's Tuesday - there's only the Goon Show on.

BILL: Well, there it is. Now he's convinced he's a second Gregory Peck. Every time he passes a shop window he blows himself a kiss.

MOIRA: I've never seen a man get so big - headed. He's even had a portrait done of himself.

BILL: I know. When they got to his eyes they had to send out for two more tubes of red paint.

MOIRA: And he's getting so vain. Do you know he spent three hours at the beauty parlour yesterday?

BILL: Oh no.

MOIRA: Yes, he went to choose a new hairstyle. He said he wanted something to suit his type of features.

BILL: So what did they do?

MOIRA: Combed it down over his face and left it there. Where's Lover Boy now?

BILL: He's having the ceiling and all the walls of his room lined with mirrors. Says he doesn't want to miss one glorious inch.

MOIRA: Sssh, here he comes now.

TONY: (COMES ON SINGING) Who's wonderful, who's marvellous, the answer is me. Who's loveable, who's kissable …… Ah, good morning, me faithful peasants. What a beautiful day it is. I've just spent an exhilarating two hours in me boudoir curling me hair.

BILL: Your hair is dead straight.

TONY: Have a look at me chest. Well, how are you two this morning? You know it does a chap like me good to occasionally come back to you plain, dull, ordinary people.

BILL: To be near you is all we ask, O Great White Master.

MOIRA: O that he would notice me and maybe smile this way.

BILL: Stop torturing yourself Cinders, the Prince will not look at <u>you</u>.

MOIRA: But Buttons, he is handsome and …..

TONY: All right, thank you, that'll do. I'm ready to dine. I think I shall have pheasant, caviare and champagne.

MOIRA: But Tony, this is breakfast.

TONY: In that case you can pour the champagne over me porridge.

MOIRA: Oh, this is too much. Ever since you got that fan letter you've been acting like a prima donna.

TONY: That fan letter made no difference to me. I'm still the same old modest, unassuming Hancock I've always been. Bill -

BILL: Yeah?

TONY: Have you seen my monocle anywhere?

BILL: I put it in the gas meter.

TONY: What did you do that for?

BILL: We needed gas to cook your Lordship's kipper.

TONY: Well I must get dressed. I've got to go down to me jeweller's to get measured for a tiepin. Now what shall I put on? Casual stuff today I think. Which beret should I wear?

MOIRA: Your yellow one, of course.

TONY: Yes, you're right. The pink one might clash with me rope sandals. Now - just pass me mauve corduroy hacking jacket and me tartan jodhpurs and we're all set.

BILL: Don't forget your leopardskin spats.

TONY: Oh, thank you.

MOIRA: This is ridiculous. All over one stupid fan letter.

TONY: It isn't just one fan letter. That young girl of nineteen -

MOIRA: Old woman of seventy eight.

TONY: It doesn't matter. She writes it on behalf of the womanhood of Britain. Now Dickie Valentine's got married, I am the nation's No. 1 Heartthrob. I am an Idol.

BILL: An idle what?

TONY: Any changes you may see in me are not of my own choosing. I have a certain responsibility to me public. Being the object of so much feminine devotion is not to be taken lightly. I have a great weight resting on my shoulders.

BILL: Don't worry, it's only your head.

TONY: It's nothing to do with me head. Some of us are born great, some acquire greatness, some have greatness thrust upon them, whereas me -

MOIRA: You just eat too much.

TONY: I just eat too - ha! Ha! Well done and watch it. What I have to say now affects you both. Now that I am a big star I shall be obliged to keep up appearances. This means I can no longer afford to have it known that I share digs with a layabout like you, Kerr. In future, if anyone asks who you are, you will tell them you are my food

taster. Er. - no. On second thoughts, bearing in mind the condition you're generally seen in, we'd better make it wine tester.

BILL: Wine tester? The nearest we've been to wine in this house was when you sat on that bunch of grapes.

TONY: Yes, I remember. You spent three hours putting me trousers through the mangle. Now you, Moira. It would never do for a woman to find out that I have a girlfriend. I don't want any suicides on me conscience. So for publicity purposes from now on you are my mother.

BILL: Have you got any vacancies for a father?

TONY: You keep away from her. Leave my Mum alone.

MOIRA: Don't you think it'll look a little odd having a mother four years younger than you?

TONY: I've thought of that. I've this grey wig here, and we can paint a few crows feet round yourr -

MOIRA: No. I'm not going to be your mother.

TONY: All right, you can be me cook.

MOIRA: Now, that's better. I'll start right away. I'm sure I saw some toadstools in the garden this morning.

TONY: There's just one more thing. I don't want you to think that because I am now a big name I've no time for me friends. I won't forget you. You'll come up with me. Together we'll soar to great heights. We'll leave all this far behind us - we'll climb up and up - higher and higher, until you're both up there amongst the stars - with me.

BILL: Thank you and bless you, Jet Morgan.

TONY: Well, must be off now. I've got an appointment down at the Vicarage. I'm selling me kisses for charity. It's a fate.

MOIRA: Worse than death.

TONY: Well, cheerio. Shan't be back till late. Have me hot chocolate ready for me. (GOES OF SINGING) .. the stars fill the sky, so in live with me am I …. Strange, dear, but true dear……

FX: (DOOR SHUT: OFF)

BILL: Now I've seen everything!

MOIRA: Well I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't heard it with my own ears!

BILL: How can a guy get so big time? So conceited, so egotistical? It's not as though he's handsome, like me.

MOIRA: Don't you start! If Tony's not careful, he's going to make a complete fool of himself. What has he got to be big - headed about? Why, if he walked down the street, nobody would recognise him.

BILL: No, but it might fool the people who saw "King Kong".

MOIRA: Something's got to be done. He's becoming unbearable.

BILL: We'll just have to speak to him.

MOIRA: That's no good. He's not granting any more audiences until after Christmas. In any case, he wouldn't listen. No, Bill, he's got to be taught a lesson.

BILL: Yeah, I think you're right.

MOIRA: The problem is - how?

BILL: I've got it. Just suppose he was mobbed a few times by a couple of hundred screaming, scratching females - and they ripped his clothes off his back - and cut locks of his hair off - perhaps he wouldn't be so keen on being a heartthrob!

MOIRA: There's only one snag. What woman in her right mind would get worked up over him?

BILL: The one's we're going to hire.

MOIRA: (REALISING) I see.

BILL: I know a couple of hundred dolls on slack time at the pickle factory who'd jump at the chance. Twenty fags each and they'll tear him to bits.

MOIRA: Well, if you think it'll work -

BILL: It's a cinch. By the time those girls have finished with him the only swollen thing about his head will be the lumps. I'll get 'em down here outside the house first thing in the morning.

GRAMS: MUSIC LINK

FX: (CROWD OF CHATTERING FEMALES)

FX: (DOOR CHIMES DOOR OPENS)

BILL: Oh, morning Moira. Come in.

FX: (DOOR SHUT & FEMALES OUT)

MOIRA: Well, you certainly haven't wasted any time, Bill. The street's jammed. There must be nearly three hundred girls out there. Has he seen 'em yet?

BILL: No. He's still in the bathroom combing his eyebrows. He'll be down soon. I'd better give last minute instructions to the girls….

FX: (DOOR OPEN) (CHATTERING FEMALES UP)

BILL: (CALLS) …. All right girls. Quiet now, quiet.

FX: (GIRLS QUIETEN DOWN)

BILL: He'll be coming out any minute now, girls. Remember your orders. You're supposed to be after souvenirs. So get your scissors out, and remember - you can have anything except the skin. Best of luck and good hunting, kids!

FX: (GIRLS CHEER; DOOR SHUT CUTS THEM OFF)

BILL: Well, the slaughterhouse is ready - where's the fatted calf?

TONY: (COMING ON) Bill, Moira, have you seen 'em? Hundreds of 'em outside. Me fans. Look at 'em. Waving banners. We Love Old Hancock. Come Hero Mine. Touch Me Tony. Ah, bless them, they've come to do me homage.

BILL: Homage, damage, what's the difference?

TONY: Ah, such devotion is touching. All right kids, be out in a minute. I'd better go out and sign a few autographs, blow a few kisses. They deserve it. Ah, watch 'em swoon when they catch a butchers at me Valentine profile. Are me eyelashes straight? Coming kids.

FX: (DOOR OPEN ; SCREAMING GIRLS: CUT SHORT BY LOUD DOOR SLAM)

TONY: Moira, close your eyes, and Bill, find me a barrel.

BILL: Tony, what happened?

TONY: I don't know. I just opened the door and whoosh - starkers! What's got into 'em?

BILL: They're your fans.

TONY: I could do with a couple right now, big ones. Hurry up with that barrel. Nobody's seen me in this condition for twenty nine years.

BILL: Here you are, climb in.

TONY: Ah, Sanctuary. Just nail me braces on the top - that should hold. All right, Moira, you can open your eyes now.

MOIRA: (STARTS LAUGHING)

TONY: (NARKED) What are you laughing at?

MOIRA: You in the barrel. Have you seen what's written on the side?

TONY: What?

MOIRA: Stout and bitter.

TONY: I'm sorry, I don't think that's very funny, I - Bill, put the stopper in the bunghole, it's draughty.

MOIRA: Just a minute Tony. What are all those girls' names tattooed on your chest? Yvonne, 1945. Fifi, 1945. Gretchen, 1945. Trudi, 1945. Karen, 1945 ….

TONY: Victory Year. Here, are those females still out there?

BILL: Yeah. They're still yelling for you Tub.

TONY: I'm not going out there again. I want to <u>share</u> meself amongst me fans, but not a bit for <u>each</u> of 'em.

BILL: It's your duty to go out there. Some of those girls have travelled miles just to see <u>you</u>. One glimpse of you is all they ask.

TONY: They just saw enough of me to last them a lifetime.

BILL: You can't disappoint your public. Those girls out there are your bread and butter. Who pays your salary? - Those girls out there.

FX: (DOOR OPEN)

TONY: (CALLS) What about a raise?

FX: (DOOR SHUT)

BILL: You're a disgrace to your profession. You're a big star now. You told us you were. Heartburn Hancock.

TONY: Throb.

BILL: The enthusiasm of these girls is the price of fame. There's you, David Whitfield, Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell, Johnny Ray, and one or two other comics. You have to put up with it. Now put another suit on and get out there.

TONY: You're right. I must go out and face them. It was probably just the excitement of seeing me manly torso that sent 'em berserk. Right. All ready. Pass me my jacket.

MOIRA: You're not going to wear your best suit. It cost you fifty guineas.

TONY: Me fans must see me at me best. Me high class monogrammed nylon shirts, me expensive hand made calf leather shoes, me Macclesfield silk tie and me valuable solid gold cufflinks. Farewell.

FX: (DOOR OPEN; SCREAMING FEMALES. CUT OFF BY LOUD DOOR SLAM)

TONY: Me cheap cedar wood beer barrel please.

GRAMS: MUSIC LINK

TONY: For the last time, I've got to get out of here. I'm due at Lime Grove to audition for Peer Gynt. I've got to get past those women.

MOIRA: Why not try sneaking out the back way?

TONY: Yes. Of course. Good girl. The back way. Down the garden, over the wall, I'm away. Here goes.

FX: (DOOR CREAKS OPEN)

TONY: (QUIET) Nobody there. See you tonight. Cheerio.

FX: (DOOR SHUT. FAIRLY LONG PAUSE; SCREAMING FEMALES. DOOR SLAMS ETC)

GRAMS: QUICK PANIC LINK

TONY: Beard.

BILL: Beard.

TONY: Dark glasses..

BILL: Dark glasses..

TONY: Wig.

BILL: Wig.

TONY: Long overcoat.

BILL: Long overcoat.

TONY: Mask.

BILL: Mask.

FX: (DOOR OPEN; SCREAMING FEMALES; CUT SHORT BY LOUD DOOR SLAM)

TONY: Barrel.

BILL: Barrel.

GRAMS: LINK

TONY: Let's see now. Silk dressing gown with the red dragons. Pigtail. Lampshade. Bit of plaster to pull me eyes back. Right.

FX: (DOOR OPEN; GIRLS IN BACKGROUND)

TONY: Excluse pliss. Make way for honolouble Chinese Laundly man.. (CHINESE GIBBERISH)

FX: (GIRLS RIOT AS BEFORE. CUT SHORT BY LOUD DOOR SLAM)

TONY: (OWN VOICE) All right. Pass honourable barrel.

GRAMS: LINK

BILL: (LOW & DRAMATIC) Right Tub. Are you ready to have another try?

TONY: Yes. All set.

BILL: Quiet now. Don't make a sound.

FX: (CLOCK STRIKES THREE)

BILL: Three o'clock.

TONY: Yes. Soon be morning. Wish that moon wasn't so bright. Anyway, I should think they're all asleep out there now.

BILL: It won't matter with your face blacked up.

TONY: Do you think it'll be alright to walk out there, or should I crawl along on me stomach?

BILL: What does it matter - you're the same height either way. Now, a bit more soot round here. A few branches and leaves round here. Now, hold your arms out. Fine. You just look like a tree. Off you go.

FX: (DOOR OPEN; HUNDREDS OF DOGS BARKING)

GRAMS: LINK

FX: (SCREAMING GIRLS: CUT SHORT BY LOUD DOOR SLAM)

TONY: (BREATHLESS) That's it. (DRAMATIC) I can't go on. Three days we've been besieged. I can't stand it - it's driving me mad! Mad - d'you hear? Mad! That's me lot. I can't go out now if I wanted to. I haven't got any more <u>clothes</u> left. They've had the lot. Six suits, four sports jackets, three pairs of flannels, two pairs of jeans, two pairs of football shorts, me knee length swimming costume and a fig leaf.

BILL: You could go out in your barrel.

TONY: No thanks. There's a couple of 'em out there with crowbars. I've got to stop here now till they all go home. Might be weeks. I'm trapped. Trapped, do you here? Trapped! (BREAKS DOWN) I think I'm going to have one of me turns.

BILL: (KINDLY) Tub, Tub, take it easy, come and sit down.

TONY: (FLAMING) How can I sit down in a barrel? Perishing fans, why don't they leave me alone! I don't know how David Whitfield manages. The seams of his suits must be riveted together. I tell you if I ever get out of this lot alive, I'll never want to see another fan again.

MOIRA: (SLIGHTLY OFF) Bill, just a minute.

BILL: Yeah?

MOIRA: (ON MIKE) I think the boy's learnt his lesson at last. He's looking pretty sorry for himself.

BILL: Yeah, it's done the trick. I don't think we'll have any more trouble from him.

MOIRA: Let's call it a day, Bill. He's been through enough, poor boy. Look at him standing there in his little barrel. I feel so sorry for him.

BILL: Why?

MOIRA: It fits.

BILL: Yeah, I think we'll give him a break. I'll go out and tell the girls we won't be needing them any more.

FX: (DOOR OPEN; GIRLS IN BACKGROUND)

BILL: (CALLS) All right girls. You can go home now, I -

FX: (GIRLS GO MAD AS BEFORE; CUT SHORT BY LOUD DOOR SLAM)

BILL: Is there room for one more in the barrel?

MOIRA: Bill, what happened?

BILL: They attacked me.

MOIRA: But you're the one who hired them.

BILL: That's why they attacked me - I can't pay 'em.

TONY: (COMING ON) Moira, was that Bill who just went outsi - (STARTS LAUGHING) … yes, it was, wasn't it! (LAUGHS)

BILL: What's so funny?

TONY: Aren't you skinny! What's that tape measure hanging round your neck?

BILL: They're my arms. Anything else?

TONY: Yes. That's a hairy old pair of pants you've got on there. Flowers and leaves and things. We've got some curtains upstairs just like - we have got some curtains upstairs just like that, haven't we?

BILL: Well, Tub - er -

TONY: I thought so. Why don't you go out and buy some clothes of your own? This isn't the first time. You went out in evening dress last week and next morning I spent three hours looking for those coal sacks.

MOIRA: Look, Laurel and Hardy, stop arguing. We've got to think of a way of getting out of here. We can't stop here for ever.

TONY: You go out and get help, Moira, they won't touch you.

MOIRA: I'm not taking the chance - we haven't got any two piece barrels.

BILL: How about calling the police?

TONY: That's right. As soon as they find out it's us, they'll send the girls down some truncheons.

BILL: Wait a minute. I've got an idea.

TONY: (FIRMLY) No.

BILL: You haven't heard it yet.

TONY: I don't have to. Every time an idea enters his head, money leaves my wallet.

BILL: Look, you want to get out of here, don't you?

TONY: Of course I do.

BILL: In one piece or in sackfulls?

TONY: All right, all right - what's the idea?

BILL: We ring up Sidney.

TONY: Not Smoothtalk Sidney James?

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: Get the sacks ready.

BILL: But Tub, Sidney's just the man to help us. He could provide a bodyguard to get us out of here. He's got some of the toughest boys in town working for him.

TONY: Look, I'm having nothing more to do with Sidney James. The man's a criminal.

BILL: He is not. He's just got strange ways.

TONY: I'm not surprised - he's been there enough times. They had his photo on Television last week didn't they?

BILL: Look, it's either Sidney or the fans.

TONY: All right. We'll call Sidney. We'll give him another chance. But I'm warning you, my Australian friend, if anything goes wrong, I'll - I'll put you up against the wall and lean on you.

GRAMS: LINK

FX: (KNOCK ON DOOR)

TONY: Who is it?

SIDNEY: (OFF) Sid. Open the door.

BILL: You'll have to wait a minute - We've locked and bolted it from the inside.

FX: (LOTS OF LARGE BOLTS BEING DRAWN. CHAINS. THE LOT! { SEVERAL SECONDS } DOOR OPEN)

BILL: Sidney! What the - ?

SID: Well, I would have been out there all day if I'd waited for <u>you</u> to open it. Now what's the trouble, Billy?

TONY: Did you see those girls out there?

SID: What, the ones with the scalping knives?

BILL: Yeah. They want to give us a permanent haircut.

SID: So what do you want from me?

BILL: Protection. The only way we can get out of here alive is under escort. We want a bodyguard - the biggest gorillas you can find.

SID: You're in luck, Billy. I've got three of the boys outside in the car.

BILL: Good - are they real toughies?

SID: Tough? These boys bash each other over the head with cricket bats, just to keep their hair down. They've got muscles where people shouldn't <u>have</u> muscles.

TONY: How big are they?

SID: Massive. Not one of 'em under five foot six.

TONY: That's not very big.

SID: Round the chest?

BILL: These sound like the guys we're looking for.

SID: Before we go any further, there's a small question of money.

TONY: It may be a small question, but it's always got a dirty great answer.

SID: These lads are very reasonable. I've got a printed catalogue here. Sidney James Protection Limited. Price list: Arms broken, five bob. Legs - they're harder of course - they work out at - let's see - fifteen and eleven each, or two for twenty five bob. Heads cracked open, twenty two and six, and eight quid a dozen. Teeth, four bob a mouthful - and cauliflower ears, fourpence a square inch.

BILL: Look Sidney, we don't want any violence.

SID: Money back if they're out of hospital within six months.

TONY: No. All we want is protection.

SID: The boys are going to be very disappointed. They haven't had a good beating up to do for weeks. I haven't got the heart to tell 'em. They're very sensitive boys. They won't half be upset. There'll be some wet pillows in <u>their</u> digs tonight, I'll tell you. Wait a minute, I'll get 'em in here ……

FX: (DOOR OPEN)

SID: (CALLS) Boys, you're wanted… Here they come. In here boys. There they are. My babies. Maurice the Mangler.

MAURICE: (GRUNTS)

SID: Shoulders McGurk.

SHOULDERS: (GRUNTS)

SID: And Steamroller Fred.

FRED: (GRUNTS)

TONY: Blimey, look at 'em. Seven foot six up to the top of their bowler hats.

SID: Well go on boys, don't be rude. Kneel down and shake hands with the gentlemen.

FX: (LOUD CRUNCH OF FINGERS)

TONY & BILL: (YELL IN AGONY)

SID: What's the matter, did they hurt you?

TONY: No, no, doesn't matter. I never did use that hand anyway.

BILL: (GROANS) My hand, my hand…

SID: Maurice, give the gentleman back his fingers.

MAURICE: (PROTESTS WITH GRUNTS)

SID: (FIRMLY) Maurice!

MAURICE: (SULKY GRUNTS)

TONY: What did Maurice say, Winnie? ( )

BILL: Say, he's quite a bruiser our Maurice.

SID: Yeah. Seven foot nine and a half inches in his socks. He's got a weak spot though. He can't stand being hit on top of his head.

BILL: Oh, good. I'll climb up his legs and slosh him one.

MOIRA: (COMING ON) Bill, those pickle factory girls are still outside, and - why Tony, we've got visitors. I didn't know your sisters were coming.

TONY: These are not my sisters. Maurice the Mangler, Shoulders McGurk and Steamroller Fred. They're our bodyguards.

MOIRA: Well, ask them to sit down. It'll take hours to get that hair oil off the ceiling.

SID: Well if you gentlemen are ready, we'll escort you out of the house and down the street. Billy and Hancock stand in the middle here, and me and the boys'll stand each side of you.

TONY: Good. Those girls won't dare attack us with you lot here.

SID: They'd better not - these boys are killers. Ready, here we go - open the door.

FX: (DOOR OPEN, PAUSE: GIRLS RIOT AS BEFORE - CUT SHORT BY LOUD DOOR SLAM. PAUSE: RECEIVER UP - DIALING)

MOIRA: Hallo, The Dog and Duck? Could you send round four more beer barrels please?

GRAMS: LINK

TONY: (LOW & TENSE) Two weeks we've been here now.

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: Pass the water bottle …. (TWO GLUGS)

BILL: That's enough. There are seven of us, remember.

TONY: Sorry I - I forgot myself - I - that's not the British way. What's the food position Moira?

MOIRA: We started off with ten tins of baked beans.

TONY: How many are left?

MOIRA: Four.

TONY: Tins?

MOIRA: Beans.

TONY: Right. Slice 'em up and pass 'em round. What news of the enemy?

BILL: They're still out there.

TONY: Haven't they got homes to go to?

BILL: Yeah. They're working eight hour shifts. They're camping out there in tents. They're determined to get us, Tub.

TONY: That's what I call real fans. They're not content with me picture in their bedroom - they want me head hanging up there.

BILL: Say, where's Sidney?

MOIRA: He's over in the corner - his boys can't get to sleep.

SID: ……. So Goldilocks goes down to the forest and she sees a little cottage - an ever so beautiful little cottage. So she goes in and what do you think is on the kitchen table? Three plates of steaming hot porridge. Yum, yum, she says…..

BOYS: (SNORE)

SID: Ah, look. They're asleep, bless 'em. Look at Mangler there cuddling his cosh, bless his little cotton socks with the dirty great spud in 'em.

BILL: Hey, Sid.

SID: What do you want?

BILL: Look, we've got to make a break. There's no food left. It's now or never.

SID: What's the use? We'll never get past those women. Look what happened last time - they frightened the life out of poor Mangler. His stubble went white overnight.

MOIRA: There must be a way out - if only we could think of it. It's like being in prison.

SID: Prison. That's it.

BILL: What?

SID: You remember the last time I was up at Dartmoor.

BILL: Oh yeah, ten years for smash and grab wasn't it?

SID: That's right. Of course I was innocent.

MOIRA: Of course.

SID: It was like I told the judge. I just happened to be passing a jeweller's shop when I saw a Colorado beetle crawling up the window - so naturally I threw a brick at it

BILL: Naturally. But it flew away and you were running up the street trying to lasso it with that string of pearls.

SID: Exactly. Well, anyway, do you remember how I got away from Dartmoor?

BILL: Yeah. You threw a saddle over one of the bloodhounds, set light to his tail and you were in Plymouth before nightfall.

SID: No, that was the time before. Last time I spent five years digging a tunnel.

BILL: (REMEMBERING) Oh, yeah.

SID: And you remember where I came up?

BILL: Yeah - Wormwood Scrubs.

SID: That was a bit of bad luck. The point is, the idea was right.

MOIRA: Are you suggesting that we dig our way out of here?

SID: Why not? It's only a couple of hundred yards. Come up the other side of 'em - they'll never know we've gone. The only thing is, we haven't got a pickaxe.

MOIRA: (HELPFULLY) We could use Bill's nose.

SID: We'll find something. Well, come on, let's get started. Wake the boys up.

MOIRA: Tony's already woken them up. Well at least he's talking to them.

TONY: ….. You know, what with the enemy out there and us in here, reminds you of the war don't it! I was in the Army myself. A lot of blokes were. Anyway, this battle I'm talking about. It was in the dessert. You remember the dessert. So this officer comes up to me - he was a bighead, just out of school mark you - you know the type. I don't mind taking it from the older blokes, but not the kids. Well, would you? So anyway, he says to me, "Advance". I says, "What? By meself?" He says, "Well the others are on leave". Well, you know me. I'm a reasonable man. But I wasn't having that. There's a limit. So I threw me rifle down. Well, that shook him. His pips nearly jumped off his shoulder. He didn't know what to say. Speechless. So he turned away, walked about ten paces, then he turned round, looked at me - just as I'm looking at you now - and he sort of smiled at me and do you know what he did? He shot me.

BILL: Hey, Tub.

TONY: Hallo.

BILL: We're going to have another try at getting out. We're going to tunnel our way out.

TONY: What a good idea! Wait a minute. That means someone's got to do some digging doesn't it?

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: Digging's hard work, isn't it?

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: (HUMS TO SELF) You've got to be strong to dig, haven't you?

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: (MORE HUMMING) You get dirty great big blisters on your hands, don't you?

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: (MORE HUMMING) Well, I er - …. Suppose we'd better start, hadn't we?

BILL: Yeah.

TONY: Yes. (MORE HUMMING)

MOIRA: Alright, come on. Pass me the shovel.

TONY: Good girl, Moira. Here you are. Dig up girl. Come on, faster, faster. She's a strong girl, etc….

GRAMS: MUSIC LINK

FX: (SOUNDS OF DIGGING)

TONY: How far have we dug?

BILL: About hundred and fifty yards.

TONY: Is that all? Hurry up, Moira, we haven't got all day. Dig girl, dig. Faster. Get your back into it.

MOIRA: I'm digging as fast as I can. If you want me to go any faster you'll have to give me the shovel.

TONY: I can't do that. I've got to have something to lean on. You know I have me turns. I don't know what's the matter with you. You've got fingers haven't you. I don't know, the girls of today aren't as strong as they used to be. Here Bill, what's happened to Sidney and his boys?

BILL: Well, you know that big tunnel we crossed over a couple of hours back?

TONY: Yes.

BILL: They caught a train and went home.

TONY: (SHOUTS) Why didn't we do that. Digging away here, I'm just about dropping.

BILL: Well, the train was going to Chalk Farm. I don't like Chalk Farm.

TONY: I see. Because you don't like Chalk Farm, we're stuck down here in this worms dugout.

MOIRA: Well, you two should feel at home.

TONY: You get on with the digging.

MOIRA: It's no good. I can't go on. I'm exhausted. I can't dig any more.

TONY: Never mind. We'll go back and catch a train. Wait a minute, where's the tunnel gone?

BILL: Well, I er…

TONY: We've been digging for 24 hours, there should be a long big hole behind us. Where is it?

BILL: Well …… you know all the earth Moira's been digging out and …. Passing back.

TONY: Yes.

BILL: Well … I've … been … sort of stacking it up behind me.

TONY: Oh, I see. Now we can't get out. No hole. Well in that case there's only one thing to do. Hand me the shovel Moira.

FX: (LOUD CLANG AS TONY HITS BILL WITH SHOVEL)

BILL: (YELLS)

TONY: Now get up and start digging. Not down that way! We're not going to Wogga - Wogga.

MOIRA: Look, Tony, surely we've come far enough. We must have passed under those girls ages ago. Let's start digging upwards and get out into the fresh air again.

TONY: Yes, all right, come on. We should be safe now. Come on Kerr, start digging.

GRAMS: LINK

FX: (DIGGING NOISES)

BILL: We can't be far now. Just - one - more - (GRUNTS)

FX: (FALLING EARTH)

BILL: Done it! Look, daylight. We're out.

TONY: At last. Where are we?

MOIRA: We're inside a building.

TONY: So we are. (SNIFFS) Here, what's that smell?

MOIRA: (SNIFFS) Smells like onions. (SNIFFS) It is onions!

BILL: Tub, quick. Back down the tunnel.

TONY: Why?

BILL: We've come up inside the pickle factory. Look out, they've seen us.

FX: (SCREAMING GIRLS AS BEFORE)

GRAMS: LINK

ADRIAN: This is the BBC Light Programme. Here is the news. Last night the police arrested two men who were found wandering round Piccadilly Circus dressed in gherkin barrels. Will anyone who can give any information as to their identities please communicate ……

GRAMS: START THEME AT " GIVE ANY " : UP & UNDER:-

ADRIAN: You have been listening to "Hancock's Half Hour", featuring the lad himself, with Moira Lister, Bill Kerr and Sidney James. Incidental music was composed by Wally Stott and recorded by the BBC Revue Orchestra conducted by Harry Rabinowitz. The script was written by Ray Galton & Alan Simpson - and the recorded programme was produced by Dennis Main Wilson.

GRAMS: THEME UP & TO END
(SEGUE)
PLAYOUT